Four Living Sermons Full of Hope for the Disabled Soldier

Heroic Men Who Have Overcome Big Handicaps Prove Character Counts More Than Arms and Legs—Story of Their Struggles and Achievements Rivals Fiction

Success and Happiness Attained by Dauntless Spirit and Will to Work —Suitable Jobs Offer Greatest Aid

By HENRY BRAXTON.

ARE you handicapped? Are you minus an arm or a leg, or are you in any way not as physically fit as the average person? Do you consider your handicap as a barrier to success? If you follow the line of reasoning of physically handicapped men who have played the game and won you will regard your handicap as a blessing in disguise.

For example, take Mike Dowling, who lost both legs, one arm and part of his right hand as a result of freezing in the big Minnesota blizzard of 1880; or Lou Young, the armless newsdealer of Union Square, New York; or Quentin D. Corley, who became a successful lawyer and county judge of Dallas, Tex., after he lost his right shoulder and part of his left arm; or Frank Bigler, who did not let the loss of an arm and a leg stand in the way of his rising to the job of purchasing agent of the Kansas City Gas Company. These four men are heroes—there are many more whose praises are unsung—who won against terrible odds, prejudice and ignorance, discouragement and disappointment, without the patriotic stimulus that sent citizens to war and without any reward waiting for them at the end.

Thousands of disabled soldiers now find themselves facing the same struggles these four men have undergone with such signal success. Many of them already have progressed far toward overcoming their handicaps. For them all there's a world of encouragement and enlightenment in the stories of the men who with dauntless spirit swept on over great obstacles to a normal plane of usefulness and happiness.

Mike's Word to the Wounded.

"Boys," said Mike to a big gathering of wounded soldiers recently, "the horse to place your bets on is the one with the handicap. He is handicapped because he has made good before and because the judges do not want him to beat the others too easily. You fellows are handicapped, but we know you can win the fight. You were handicapped by the Hun, who couldn't win. Your handicap is a blessing, for now you will have to think and work as you never had to before. You don't need hands and feet; you need courage and character."

Mike knows. He played the game like a thoroughbred, and to-day his business card reads:

MR. MICHAEL J. DOWLING,
President Olivia State Bank,
Olivia, - - Minnesota.

His story is remarkable. It reads like a piece of fiction, but it is really a record of achievement. Mike's story gives new hope to "cripples"—there are hundreds of thousands of them who ask for a chance to make good—and Mike tells it in words that everybody can understand.

"I was fourteen years old when I was lost in the Minnesota blizzard. For five years previous—my mother died when I was 10, and my father had all he could do to take care of himself—I had been making my own way. I held jobs as cookee in a Wisconsin lumber camp and on several Mississippi steamboats plying between St. Paul and St. Louis, water carrier on a farm and kid cowboy on a Wyoming ranch.

Problems After the Blizzard.

"I was out in that blizzard from 7 in the evening until sunrise the next morning. The sun came up the next day, so did I—out of a bed in a strawpile where I sought shelter—and when I tried to crawl to a nearby house I found I couldn't bend my knees or open my hands. I got there after a while and roused the people. The good lady of the house filled a tub with cold water and I put both arms up to the elbows and both legs up to the knees in the water, and then came the thawing out process.

"The surgical operation was performed some sixteen days later on a kitchen table covered with oil cloth, in a little house in the village of Canby. If ever any germs had an opportunity on any one they had it on me—but I just grew fat on them. Three doctors were at work on me, but I still succeeded in living. I lost both legs, an arm, and all except the thumb of my remaining hand.

"After I got through paying doctors' bills and buying medicines with the money that I raised by selling five head of young cattle, I had only one thing left—a pony that I prized above anything in the world. He had to go too and I cried all night after I sold him. Soon I had no money and I became a problem for the county of Yellow Medicine, Minnesota, to solve.

"On the Board of County Commissioners were two old Norwegians, a sailor and a farmer, plain but big hearted, and a Yankee bred in the purple in Maine, a former director of a seminary in the east. When the question came up, 'What shall we do with Mike?' the gentleman of high education said that he had partially completed arrangements with a farmer to take care of him for the rest of his life for $2 a week. Mike was standing close at hand on his knees—on pads made so that he could walk—and he had all to do to keep from jumping into the air and landing on top of that learned gentleman. One of the Norwegian members of the board came to the rescue and said, 'Let's not hurry about this. What do you think about it, Mike?'

College Plan Wins.

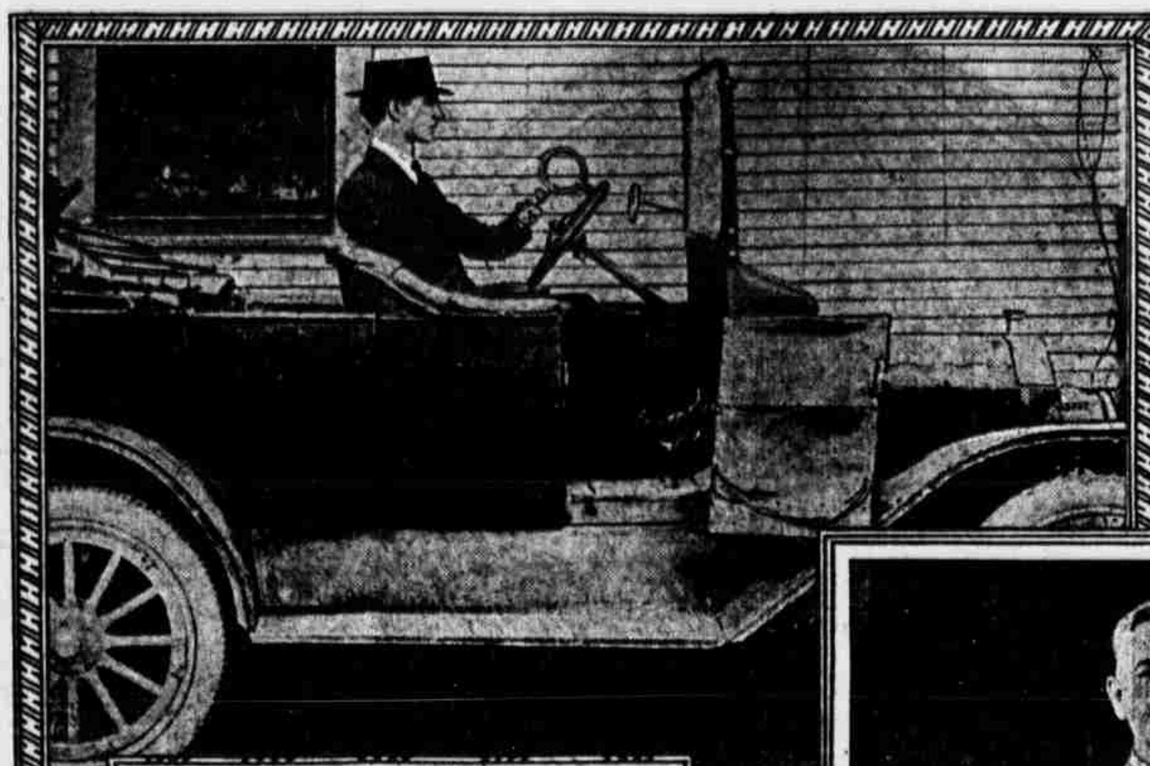
"I looked up at him and said, 'If you will give me one year at Carleton College it will never cost this county another cent as long as I live.'

"They pondered my proposition, not knowing whether to take me seriously or not, but the next morning the vote stood two for sending me to college for a year and one to put me out on the farm at a cost of $2 a week for the rest of my days.

"I went to college, after which I taught school for seven years, at the same time taking odd jobs at painting fences, running a roller skating rink and selling books by subscription. I taught three years in the county, when I was promoted to a graded school, and the last three years I was appointed superintendent of the first high school in Renville county, the county where I now live.

"I ran a weekly paper while I taught school and soon got into politics. I was made assistant to the chief clerk of the House of Representatives, then chief clerk, and later member of the House. I was also elected Speaker of the House against the wishes of the faction in control.

LOU YOUNG SELLS A PAPER TO FRANK R. BIGLER IN UNION SQUARE PARK.



JUDGE QUENTIN D. CORLEY OF DALLAS, TEXAS, OUT FOR A RIDE

FRANK R. BIGLER USES A TYPEWRITER AS WELL AS A TWO-ARMED MAN. NOTE THE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT FOR USE OF THE SHIFT KEY...

MICHAEL J. DOWLING of OLIVIA, MINN.

"Since the time of the freezing, life has been worth living and to me it has been a great joy. I married a beautiful girl, have three daughters who take after their mother—one is a sophomore in college, the other a junior in high school and the other in the seventh grade. I am happy to say that when a man's legs are frozen off he does not pass on to the next generation the same condition. I am the only member of the family who is compelled to wear artificial legs.

"I drive my own car, dance, roller skate, travel about without any assistance whatever, and mother and the girls never think of dad as having any affliction or misfortune. Their verdict is that he is just about the happiest old dad they know of.

"Just a word about my philosophy of success. It occurred to me way back in 1880 that there was just one thing for me to do if I did not have any legs or arms, and that was to polish up the machinery above the neck. I was active, full of fight, and I suddenly found myself with most of the fight cut off—at least that part which I used to fight with successfully—so I transferred my thoughts from those things that were gone to what was left. A man is worth $100,000 a year—if he can make it honestly—above the neck, and he may not be worth over $1.50 a week below. If anybody tells you that because a man loses a leg or two or an arm or both of them he is a cripple, just refer him to me and I will take care of him. The finest looking men in the world may have more cause to regret things that they have done, and they may not enjoy life as much as the man who is less regarded because he is a cripple. There is no such thing as a cripple if the mind is right."

So much for Mike. Now look at those two precious hands of yours and suppose that suddenly they were snatched away and in their places only awkward stumps remained. No fingers to do unconsciously for you the thousands of things that you exact of them daily. What would you do? It's pretty hard to answer a question like that, but it has been answered very effectively by Lou Young, who makes his two stumps do all that our good hands do for us.

Lou runs one of the busiest newsstands in the city in Union Square Park, and to see him make change, sell papers, sign receipts, open and close his stand, you would hardly notice the absence of hands. Newsdealer Young doesn't use artificial appliances either. His only aid is a little wrist strap that he fastens on to his right stump, using his teeth in the process of fastening. Into this strap he can adjust hammer, toothbrush, buttonhook, fork, shovel, or any sort of tool. Lou stands over six feet, is vigorous, athletic, and surprises the crowd in the park during the noon hour by catching and throwing a ball. And he gets the ball away from his shoulder with speed.

I remember a talk that Lou gave to a group of cripples who were badly in need of inspiration. That talk was straight from the shoulder, too.

"Listen, boys," he said. "Have I been panhandling since I lost my hands fifteen years ago? I started right in driving a wagon for a department store and I delivered the packages besides. When I applied for a permit to run a newsstand they turned me down because they thought I couldn't get away with it. That's what people will say to you to-day if you haven't the nerve to show that you can make good. I demanded my permit as a citizen and kept on asking until I got it.

"I started out to work early this morning. Nobody helped me dress, wash or eat. I put in a hard day's work at my newsstand and handled the job as fast and as well as any dealer in town. I'm not any different than you fellows. Keep smiling and keep a stiff upper lip. You'll get there!"

Thus spake Lou, and the message got home. A living sermon for the boys who leave an arm or both on the battlefield. A new day is dawning for the cripple when men like Mike Dowling and Lou Young make themselves felt in a world that has given but scant constructive thought to the disabled man in the past.

Frank R. Bigler is another cripple who will come back at you strong if you call him that. Bigler wears an artificial leg and part of his right arm is gone as a result of a railroad accident thirty-one years ago, but he points proudly to a record of twenty-two years on the same job.

Bigler joined the Red Cross when that organization was beginning a campaign to smooth the path of the returned crippled soldier. He visited factories and shops in and around New York city to get a line on the possibilities in industry for disabled men. The idea of a one armed or a one legged man going to work and getting real wages was something new to most employers, but Bigler told them that it can be done, and, what is more demonstrated his contention, and secured positions for hundreds of the city's cripples. Even the great Thomas A. Edison received Bigler and heard his story, slapping him on the back in hearty approval.

Bigler is not handicapped. He laces his shoes, eats his meat with a "one armed man's knife and fork," which combines both in a curved steel blade with four prongs cut into the tip. He "rolls his own" too, by means of a special device that he invented—a small cylindrical rod around which the paper is rolled and over which a funnel slides to guide "the makings." The bar is passed through the funnel, the tobacco drops, the paper slips off and the cigarette is made.

Bigler is an optimist and he advertises his optimism on the back of his personal card with a motto that reads:

From the day you are born till you ride in a hearse
There is nothing so bad it couldn't be worse.

Not great poetry, but you can't dodge the message.

Quentin D. Corley, the smiling judge of the sunny South, is a remarkable example of self-rehabilitation. This sympathetic mild-mannered gentleman is the hero of a battle that he fought—one is tempted to say "single handed," but Corley was not even as fortunate as that. He lost his entire right arm, shoulder and collar bone and his left hand as a result of falling under a train when he attempted to board it. He met the accident in 1905 in Utica, on his way to New York to study civil engineering, after the "wanderlust" had prompted him to leave his home in Dallas, Texas. He got back to Dallas, a boy of twenty-one, without money and apparently no prospects of work. From those to whom he applied for a job there was always the offer of a half-dollar but never any real help or encouragement. He finally persuaded one employer that his brains were still intact even if his arms weren't, and he got a job as "straw boss" in charge of a grading outfit at $1.50 a day.

In the meantime he was busy trying to invent an appliance that would serve as a left arm, and so make him independent of the aid of others. When an obstacle arose he invented a device that would help him overcome it.

Corley has now no difficulty in getting along, his only aid being an apparatus that he wears on the stump of his left arm. It looks like a hook at first glance, but it really is a delicate piece of mechanism that consists of two flat pieces of steel fastened together by a string. A pull on the cord running to the shoulder opens the jaws of the hook and into them he clamps a pencil, a toothbrush, a razor, a knife, fork, or any other implement that he needs in the daily routine. He can even pick up a pin or a piece of paper with his instrument.

Corley is absolutely independent; he carries his own bag, travels about the country alone, dresses, washes and eats unaided, opens doors, uses the telephone, takes money out of his purse, winds his watch and does alone the hundreds of things that are so easy for you with your two good arms.

Attains Higher Goal.

Corley was not content with merely surmounting a physical handicap. He had a larger ambition in life. He studied law and passed the bar examination in 1907. A year later he was elected Justice of the Peace, served two terms, and in 1912 won the office of County Judge of Dallas county, the youngest Judge that ever held that office.

All his success was made after his accident, and Corley is proud of that. In 1910 he married and has two beautiful children. The Judge is a hard worker, but he likes to play too. One of his hobbies is gardening, at which he is very proficient. All the vegetables at the Corley table are grown in the home garden. He does his own spading, hoeing and planting, tends to his flowers and trims the lawns.

Corley is a fine swimmer. He likes to dive off the springboard and swims easily on his back, using his feet to propel his body. He runs his own car, and in several years has met only one trivial accident. He has recently taken up bowling, inventing a special apparatus, not unlike ice tongs in appearance, with which he holds the bowling ball and speeds it along by releasing a catch.

Judge Corley tells an amusing story of his early campaigning days in Dallas. He couldn't get his cards out of his pockets then as he does now, and had to ask people to take them out for him. "I went into a store one day and was met by an Italian woman," said the Judge. "I asked if her husband was in and she told me in broken English that he was out. I asked her to take out one of my cards, tried to explain that I was candidate for justice of the peace, and wanted to leave a card for her husband. She evidently did not understand me, for she put a dime in my pocket. I tried to tell her that I was not begging, and I finally had to leave the store a dime to the good."

After meeting Judge Corley and talking with him, you would never think of him again as a cripple. You stifle that impulse to give him a helping hand, for he has convinced you that he doesn't need it. Corley is a man every inch, and his advice as to how to handle cripples commands respect.

Work Is the Greatest Help.

"When folks say to me, 'Pretty badly crippled, aren't you?' my reply is 'I am not crippled now. I was at one time.' I can now do everything I ought to and some things doubtless that I ought not to. If I have made good without any arms why can't others less seriously handicapped do the same? Don't give a cripple any money that he doesn't work for, but give him something to do and pay him for it. The more the cripple does for himself the more he can do and his life becomes brighter with each new accomplishment. And don't play sad music when cripples are around. Cheer them up; treat them like normal persons who have a little extra work to do in the world. They will respect you more, and learn a great lesson themselves: self-respect."

Compared with the achievements of men like Mike Dowling and Judge Corley, many of us are "cripples" despite our sound bodies and minds. "It's a problem of the spirit," says Mike. "If the spirit commands the flesh will obey." How many of us have this "spirit" except when we are right up against the stone wall? Many a mediocre man would rise to the top if enough obstacles were put in his path. Surmounting handicaps became a habit with Dowling, Young, Bigler and Corley, and after their physical handicaps were overcome they "kept on going."

Now is the time for the cripple "to start and keep on going." He can no longer sit back and wait for the monthly pension to trickle in or for the coin to drop into the tin cup. The Dowlings and Corleys of the cripple world have made that impossible. They have taught the public that the cripple can make good if he is met halfway and treated sensibly. they have taught the employer that the cripple can do the work of a normal man if the right job is found for him and they have taught the cripple the difference between an existence of dependence and degradation and a life of self-support and self-respect.

On the Inside in the Heart of the Moonshine Country

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ingenious method of hollowing logs and making pipes of them by burning through the middle of them with red hot iron bars. They bind the joints with bark to make them water tight.

The stills are all in full blast in the fall after the crops are harvested. In the spring and summer they are not worked as regularly as they might be, owing to the fact that the men are engaged much of the time in putting in and taking care of the gain and garden truck. The women are of valuable assistance in the farming operations. Barefooted and dressed in calico dresses topped by sun bonnets, they plant and hoe many hours a day in the hot sunshine on the hillsides.

During the day the moonshiners spend much of their time in town, pursuing their activities at the stills after nightfall.

After darkness comes the smoke from the fires at the stills is not visible, and consequently detection is rendered more difficult. The crafty mountaineers who make M. S. whiskey are continually gathering brush and burning piles of it. As a result, owing to the many fires, it becomes practically impossible to determine what particular column of smoke may or may not indicate the presence of a still. The hazy atmosphere in the mountains of the moonshine districts is caused by these numerous fires.

Hospitality a Leading Virtue.

The folk of the moonshine districts are simple minded and hospitable. Poor as they are, they will take the traveller in, house and feed him, although watching his every move for fear that he may be a revenue man. The houses, mostly one story log cabins, have no carpets; the flooring consists of planks laid from a quarter of an inch to an inch apart, and when cleaning becomes necessary the dirt is swept into the large cracks. They are devout churchgoers, favoring the Baptist denomination. Hardly a moonshine family exists in Kentucky that does not cease its unlawful business long enough to attend divine service at the nearest possible point on Saturday afternoon or Sunday. Also at church enemies sometimes meet, men who are suing one another over the price of a mule or a load of corn. They will desert the services, go out into the woods and shoot at one another with their .45-calibre revolvers. If one of them lives he may be able to return to church in time to hear the last of a sermon possibly having for a text "Love thy brother as thyself."

They are saving, ambitious people and aspire to have their children become either school teachers or lawyers. The local school teachers receive $200 a year, and the practice of law is not much more remunerative. The rural legal lights in the region about London and Manchester will accept $10 or $15 as a retainer in a murder case with the hope of receiving from $25 to $75 at the end of the trial.

They Love Going to Law.

Lawsuits are begun for very trivial causes. The mountaineers call bringing a suit "lawing a man." They will "law" you for $4 or $5 which is in dispute over a transaction, and the man that loses will likely seek salve for his wounded feelings by shooting the winner.

The shooting aptitude of the men in the moonshine districts renders attacks on stills very dangerous to the revenue men and in certain instances they endeavor to reach the distilling plants when there is no one about. They can then destroy the apparatus without great danger. The Government officers make a particular point of destroying the copper coil or "worm" in which the vapor is condensed. These coils are difficult to replace, as they have to be brought from Cincinnati, which is 171 miles from London by rail. Dealers will not always sell coils to mountaineers, and consequently they often have to get a Cincinnati citizen to make the purchase for them. Once obtaining the worm the moonshiner has to face the difficult problem of taking it back home unobserved. Arriving at London or Manchester, he has to conceal it in a bag of meal or in a barrel of coal oil, or something similar. He will then throw the bag over the back of a mule and proceed to his abode.

The whiskey makers of the Kentucky mountains have grown up to be sufficient unto themselves; they do not want to be interrupted in their chosen vocation of operating stills, nor do they desire any member of what they call the "uppish classes," like the residents of the "blue grass" section of the State—Versailles, Bowling Green, Lexington, Louisville, Paris, &c.—to come near them at any cost, fearing that they in their homespun clothes and barefeet will suffer ignominy in comparison. The mountaineers live their lives as they please, regardless of what the outside world has prescribed as being conventional. A whole family will sleep in one room; a man will think nothing of drinking a quart of whiskey a day, and the grown-ups ignore such useless things as newspapers, magazines and books.

An instance of the total disregard of so-called custom is had in the circumstances attending the funeral of Bill Metcalf's first wife. Bill lives between Hazard and Hyden, near the Cumberland foothills, in a most dangerous section of the moonshine zone. His first wife died about two years ago and no funeral ceremony was held. He married Miss Lucy Webb last February, and in May of this year he decided that the first Mrs. Metcalf was entitled to a funeral service. He invited his second wife to attend the ceremony, and Bill, Lucy, several relatives and friends journeyed to a nearby section of a hillside where the grave was located, and the circuit minister delivered a prayer, a few hymns were sung, and the affair was over. The new wife stood by Bill's side and viewed the proceedings unconcernedly.

Here's Their Philosophy.

The innate neglectful attitude of the moonshiners toward the orderly or conventional side of life probably accounts in a measure for their failure to understand why the Government should interfere with the making of moonshine whiskey.

Their view of the Government's lack of authority over them can be summed up as follows, from their own words, stated hundreds of times: "Say, mister, we own our property, don't we? And we own the corn we raise, too. We cain't sell much corn 'cause they aint no railroad to carry it to market. 'Taint possible to haul it over the hilly, rocky roads to London. So what air we a goin' to do? Cain't live on nothin', so we just got tuh make moonshine. That's the best thing we know how tuh do, anyhow. The Guv'ment don't lose nothin' if they lets us alone. They spend more money sneakin' around after us than the stuff is worth, anyhow. We don't bother with nobody but ourselves, and we want tuh be let alone, tuh mind our own business."

And there you have the logic of the Kentucky and Tennessee moonshiners. What is more, they are ever ready to put their faith in this reasoning to test by engaging in gun play with any foolhardy disputant. The man who emerges from the fray in a breathing condition will be conceded to be the winner of the argument.

The references to guns and gun play in this article are entirely conservative. The folk in the more advanced and more thickly populated sections of the country, in fact, are far from a correct realization of the reliance the mountaineers of Kentucky and Tennessee place on their firearms. To go unarmed, to them, would be the same as to send a Fifth avenue debutante to her coming-out party without jewels—or even worse.

An illustration of the freedom with which the mountaineers of the moonshine district use firearms is had in the relation of one of the adventures of the man who put up for a night at the Easton London Hospital at London, Ky., run by Mr. Hurd, a brother of the secretary of Congressman Caleb Powers. In the evening Mr. Hurd, who sat on the front porch smoking, finally said to this man: "Guess ah'll go to bed. You know where yer room is. Go upstairs and you'll find yer lamp burning. But—er—say. Ah reckon you'd better put yer light out, 'cause we've been havin' some trouble lately with our neighbors across the river. They've been a-'shootin' our lights out, an' ye better keep yer shutters closed, too."

It seems mere surplusage to state here that the man thus warned, who was a native of Kentucky, followed instructions to the letter.

On glancing about his room in the morning he noticed a jagged hole in the wall directly over one of the pillows of the bed. Inquiring concerning this hole, the following response was made: "Um-m, yaas. Thar was a feller here thet some'un 'cross th' river was lookin' fer, and that person, figgerrin' jus' as how the room was fixed, shot from across the river at where he reckoned the bed lay, after our boadah he'd gone to bed. He shot right through the wall, but the bullet went two or three inches too high."

"Well, what happened then?"

"Oh, thet feller finally came on across over heah, an' he went upstaihs an' shot an' killed him as he lay in his bed. An' thet's th' bed you slep' on las' night."

"You don't say so! But—er—what was done to the man who did the shooting?"

"Oh, he went away. Fellah he killed wus no good, ennyway, far as any one knows. The county's well rid of him. Ah guess. Too bad it was pulled off 'round heah, though. We don't have much trouble heah'bouts. But, say, ovah theah in Laurel and Knox county they's a bad lot. Seems like they's ashootin' all th' time ovah theah."

These latter statements are peculiarly significant, as they are characteristic of the Kentucky mountaineer whenever his own locality is arraigned. He always proclaims the lawabiding nature of his neighbors and lays the blame for a killing or for moonshining on others far removed.

Further On They're Worse.

"Naow, mister," he will tell you, "theah ain't no sech thing ez that theah moonshine whiskey made heah-'bouts, but they do say, some folks do, thet ovah in Jackson county they do make some."

An outpost of the M. S. clans near Manchester is Steve Little's cabin. Lying north of the town the favored person who is trusted can readily be guided to stills that have produced thousands of quarts of whiskey, and are now producing them.

On and about Wildcat Mountain is found the centre of the M. S. industry in Kentucky. Contempt of the law thereabouts is a part of the birthright of the newborn babe as well as of the bearded grandfather. Suspicion lurks in the shadows, trained trigger fingers twitch involuntarily at the sound of a falling stone, even though strangers are rarely ever seen there, because they cannot penetrate the isolated barriers of rifles and "forty-fives."

The cabin of Ira Johnson, at the foot of Wildcat Mountain, marks the entrance to this flourishing moonshine headquarters. Climb the fence and follow the path up the mountainside

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